



Strategic Priorities of the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG)

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The Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) is a grass roots volunteer organisation of more than 700 members, representing the interests of the very large number of Brisbane residents who ride bicycles to, from and within the Brisbane city centre. It vigorously seeks policy decisions at all levels of government supporting cycling, and in particular relating to improved infrastructure, end-of-trip facilities, integration of cycling with other transport modes and a cyclist-friendly regulatory environment.

These strategic priorities of the Brisbane CBD BUG detail the changes critical to enabling Brisbane to achieve sustained increases in the proportion of people riding bikes for transport. These priorities aim to support a reshaping of Brisbane residents' choices for personal transport within this city away from viewing their motor vehicles as the default transport mode.

Through actively adopting these approaches Brisbane's long term economic prosperity will be secured, while also enriching its social and environmental credentials.

The CBD BUG's strategic priorities are summarised in the box below, while information on the importance of each priority is provided in subsequent sections.

Strategic Priorities

- Reduce Queensland's default speed limit in built-up areas to 30km/h.
- Remove the large number of other cyclist-hostile provisions from the Queensland Road Rules (QRR) to encourage more people to ride bicycles.
- Brisbane City Council to change its CityCycle scheme to optimise its utilisation.
- Accelerate the delivery of much needed major cyclists route infrastructure for people to safely ride bicycles.
- Queensland Government and Brisbane City Council to ensure they meet their strategic goals of increasing the number of people riding bicycles for transport.

- **Reduce Queensland's default speed limit in built-up areas to 30km/h.**

One of the most salient examples of the hostile nature of the Queensland Road Rules (QRR) towards people who ride bikes (and also people walking) is Queensland's 50km/h default speed limit for local streets in built-up areas. This default speed limit is mandated in Rule 25 of the QRR.

Despite the overwhelming weight of credible evidence that this speed limit should be 30km/h, and the claimed "safe systems" approach of the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads, the default built-up area speed limit continues to be 50km/h. Furthermore, roads are frequently "upgraded" to 60km/h without properly assessing the safety of cyclists and/or pedestrians.

This is also the case despite this speed limit reduction having only a marginal impact on motorist trip times, and the vast benefits to the community through enhancing safety for those walking and riding bicycles.

Motorist rat running is a widespread problem for residents due to motorists trying to avoid congested arterial roads. Rat running reduces resident amenity and poses a serious risk to cyclists and pedestrians (particularly children and the elderly).

Reducing the default speed limit for built-up areas to 30km/h will serve as a disincentive for rat running by motorists. However, where motorist rat running continues it may also be desirable that further traffic calming measures are applied, including the creation of cul-de-sacs via mid-block physical barriers that allow cyclist and pedestrian permeability.

- **Remove the large number of other cyclist-hostile provisions from the Queensland Road Rules (QRR) to encourage more people to ride bicycles.**

The CBD BUG has identified the large number of provisions within the QRR that discourage people from riding bicycles for transport. These provisions can be categorised into two types, rules that increase risk to people riding bicycles, and rules that simply make riding a bicycle inconvenient and/or unviable.

The many cyclist-hostile provisions within the QRR were documented in detail by the Brisbane CBD BUG in its submission to the 2012 Inquiry into Cycling Issues. The CBD BUG has called on the Queensland Government to implement all 68 of the report's recommendations, rather than "cherry picking" the recommendations.

- **Brisbane City Council to change its CityCycle scheme to optimise its utilisation.**

Based on the experiences from the introduction of large scale public bike share scheme in overseas cities e.g. New York, Paris etc. Brisbane City Council's CityCycle scheme is a superb opportunity to foster Brisbane's nascent cycling culture and actually move this city towards being the much-espoused new "World City".

However, the lack of suitable measures supporting CityCycle's introduction has resulted in this scheme being the least used scheme in the world for a similarly scaled scheme operated by JCDecaux (measured on the basis of utilisations per bike per day).

The following changes need to be made to enable CityCycle to deliver on its full potential.

- Streamline the registration process so a user can immediately take a bike after entering some basic identification details and swiping a legitimate credit card at a CityCycle station.
- Installation of segregated bike lanes connecting the network of CityCycle stations and throughout the Brisbane CBD.
- Adult CityCycle riders to be exempt from Queensland's mandatory cyclist helmet law.
- Remove the family-unfriendly minimum 17 year age limit for users and allow parents to make an informed decision about their children's capability to safely use CityCycle.

- **Accelerate the delivery of much needed major cyclists route infrastructure for people to safely ride bicycles.**

Brisbane City Council (BCC) administers 95% of the 6,000km of roads within its boundary. Council also claims it has a 1,100km bikeway network. However, analysis of BCC bikeway data indicates this is misleading. Only 40% of the "network" is off-road, while the majority on-road component is largely "Bicycle Awareness Zone" (BAZ). However, DTMR recommends that BAZ only be used as short connectors between high quality facilities. Furthermore, where bike lanes have been installed they are regularly blocked by parked cars or rendered unusable by being located in the "door zone".

Finally, large parts of the on-road bicycle network are double counted by measuring both sides of the road. This is not the same methodology Council uses to measure its road network.

With this background it is clear there is a pressing need for the current snail's pace at which Brisbane's cycling network is being delivered to be accelerated. Following are the much needed major cyclist route infrastructure priorities identified by the CBD BUG. It is envisaged that these projects will result in safe and direct connections between the CBD and suburbs.

- North—delivery by Brisbane City Council and Queensland Government of the North Brisbane Cycleway to provide a link between the CBD and Chermside and address the very low levels of commuting to the CBD by bicycle because of the absence of safe cycling routes.
- West – Brisbane City Council to change Sylvan Road and create the much needed connection between the Bicentennial Bikeway (Brisbane's busiest bikeway) and the Centenary Bikeway by removing car parking and installing Copenhagen style bicycle lanes
- South – change Annerley Road to safely accommodate people riding bikes on-road using a physically separated bicycle lane. On the basis of the 34 cyclists injured in crashes on Annerley Rd since 2007 it is Queensland's worst cyclist black spot.
- East – with the eastern suburbs also languishing in terms of growth in the proportion of trips to the CBD made by bike Brisbane City Council to create two bicycle rider routes linking Wynnum and Carindale to the CBD via Stanley / Vulture Street.

These projects are likely to require some removals of on-street parking to enable installation of on-road bike lanes. The CBD BUG views the resulting minor reduction in motorist convenience as an acceptable offset for enabling cyclist safety.

If a popular cycling route does not have adequate cycling safety, then either it needs to be engineered to address this, or the speed limit must be reduced to make it safer for people riding bikes.

- **Queensland Government and Brisbane City Council to ensure they meet their strategic goals of increasing the number of people riding bicycles for transport.**

Governments at various levels have published statements articulating their strategies for increasing the community's everyday cycling. Most prominent among these from the CBD BUG's perspective is the Queensland Government's *Active Transport Strategy 2012–2026* and Brisbane City Council's *Active Transport Strategy 2012–2026*.

These documents have indicated positive approaches to achieving goals in terms of more people riding bikes every day. However, due to the lack of investment required to accompany these statements that would enable achievement of the stated aspirations these documents are perceived as largely being more about government being seen to be doing something rather than actually doing something.

On this basis the following government actions are critical.

- Develop indicators that meaningfully measure changes in the usage of bicycles for transport and the effectiveness of its activities
- Report at least annually on progress against these indicators to demonstrate the status of utility bicycle riding.
- The Queensland Government and Brisbane City Council to allocate at least 5% of their respective annual transport budgets specifically to delivering facilities for people who ride bicycles.